(b) Action against hoarders and blackmarketeers for violations of the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and control orders issued thereunder, are taken by State Governments/ UT Administration. During the year 1994, as per reports received from States/ UTs. 4846 persons were prosecuted and 4078 persons were convicted for such violations. Details of individual cases are not maintained by the Central Government.

(c) and (d) No such specific instance has been brought to the notice of the Government.

(e) In view of replies to (c) and (d), Question does not arise.

Proposal to establish autonomous consumer councils

7578. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 5806 given in the Rajya Sabha on 15th May, 1995 and state:

(a) whether Government will consider establishing autonomous consumer comcils in every State in addition to the existing consumer courts to keep a watch on prices of essential commodities, and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) There is no proposal with the Ministry of Civil Supplies, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution to establish autonomous consumer councils in any State to keep a watch on prices of essential commodities.

(b) Does not arise.

Fair Price Shops in the country

7579. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Fair Price Shops in the country as on 31st March, 1995, State-wise; and

(b) the percentage of total population of the country covered by these shops, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) The number of fair prices shops, state-wise, as reported by Government/UT Administrations, is given in Statement. (See below)

(b) As per the present policy of the Central Government coverage of Public Distribution System (PDS) is universal in nature and the entire population in a State is covered by the Fair Price Shops and the PDS in that State.

Statement

Number of Fair Price Shops as per reports received from States/UTs.

State	Total	Reported As on
Andhra Pradesh	397972	Dec. 93
Arunachal Pradesh	865	Dec. 94
Assam	27522	Sep. 93
Bihar	51828	Dec. 93
Goa	578	Jun, 94